

Update on CEQA GHG Significance Thresholds

Agenda Item No. 2

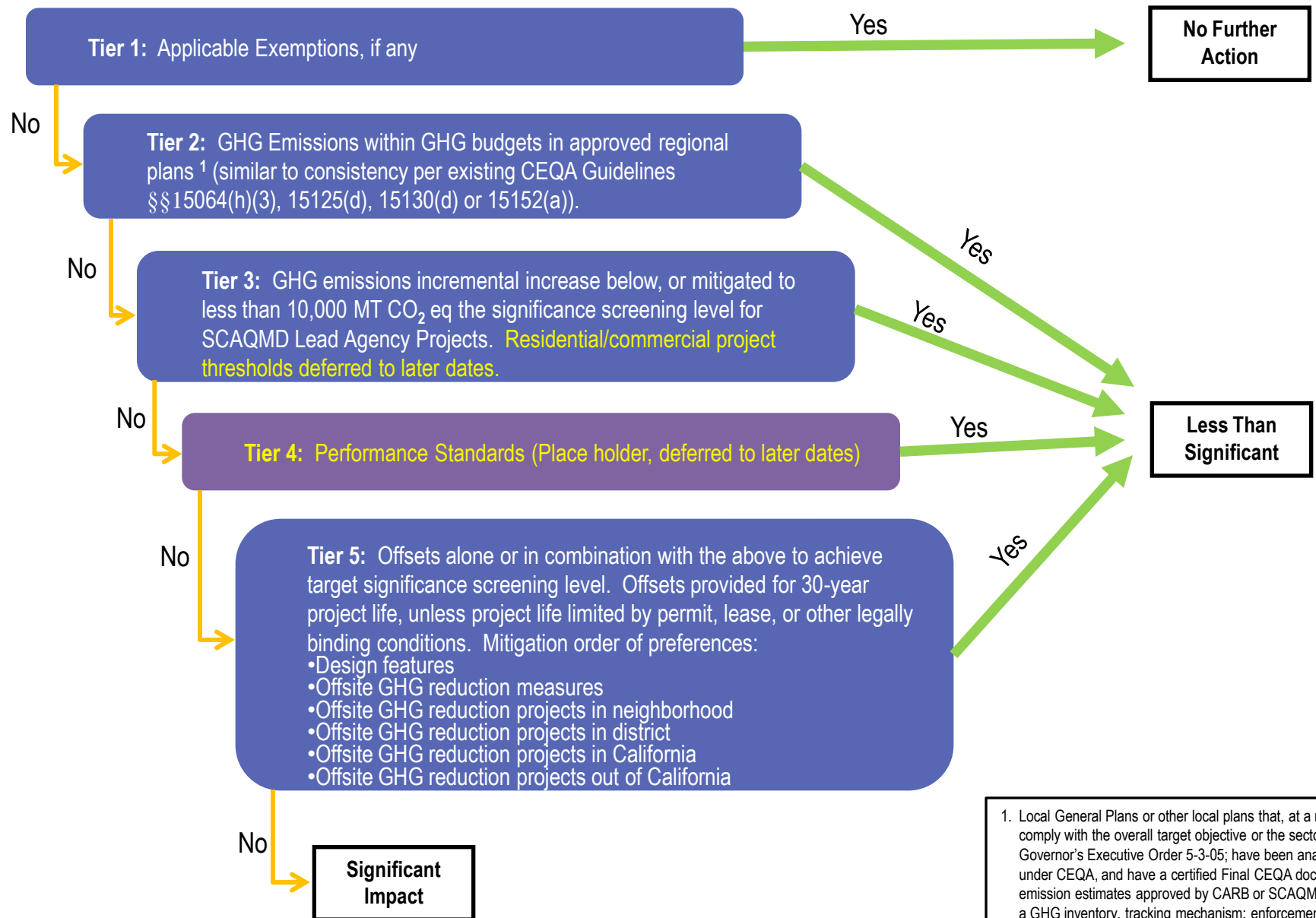
Climate Change Committee

September 11, 2009

Background

- AQMD board approval of CEQA GHG significant threshold for industrial projects where AQMD is the lead agency
 - December 2008
- Directed staff to participate in CARB's statewide effort
- Status report back to the Board March 2009
- Continued staff efforts on significant thresholds for residential and commercial sectors

Framework for CEQA GHG Significance Determination



Approach

- Over 700 past development projects from OPR analyzed for potential GHG emissions
 - 414 projects for residential development
 - 223 projects for commercial development
 - 74 mixed use projects

Current Staff Proposal

- Same policy objective Board approved for industrial projects
 - Capture 90% of GHG emissions via CEQA review
- Two options for lead agency's consideration
 - Option 1: 3000 mty CO₂e for any residential, commercial, or mixed use projects
 - Option 2:
 - Residential: 3500 mty CO₂e
 - Commercial: 1400 mty CO₂e
 - Mixed Use: 3000 mty CO₂e

Key Comments

- Preference for option 1 vs. 2 mixed
- AQMD staff to document the process and methodology (“substantial evidence”) to support lead agencies in case of litigation
- AQMD staff to work on Tier 4 – performance standards

Other Activities

- Provided comments to the Natural Resources Agency on proposed CEQA Guidelines Amendments regarding GHG emissions
 - Scope of CEQA analysis
 - Priority of mitigation
 - Clarification on “life-cycle” analysis

Next Steps

- Initiate discussion on Tier 4 – Performance Standards approach
- Continue working group meetings
- Staff proposal for Board consideration
December 2009